

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY
OFFICE OF FISCAL AND MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS**

301 State House
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FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

LS 7573

BILL NUMBER: HB 1519

DATE PREPARED: Jan 3, 2001

BILL AMENDED:

SUBJECT: Miscellaneous election law changes.

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**FUNDS AFFECTED: X GENERAL
DEDICATED
FEDERAL**

IMPACT: State & Local

Summary of Legislation: This bill changes the maximum size of a precinct from 1,200 active voters to 2,000 active voters, with certain exceptions. The bill also provides that a county election board may establish the number of voters a precinct may contain that permits the precinct to have its polls located at the same location as another precinct. It changes the application deadline for voting an absentee ballot before a traveling board from noon the day before election day to 8 a.m. the day before election day. The bill provides that an absentee traveling board may not visit a voter later than noon on the day before election day. It also makes conforming changes.

Effective Date: July 1, 2001.

Explanation of State Expenditures: The Indiana Election Commission may have additional administrative expenditures, as a result of the proposal, concerning mailing of notices to inactive voters. The Commission should be able to absorb these expenditures given its current budget.

Explanation of State Revenues:

Explanation of Local Expenditures: If the number of active voters in a precinct were increased, as the proposal would require, a reduction in expenditures could result for counties. An active voter is defined by statute as a voter who satisfies either of the following: A) The voter has registered or voted in any election during the preceding four years at the address indicated on the voter's registration record or; B) The voter has not voted in any election during the preceding four years at the address indicated on the voter's registration record and has responded in writing to an address confirmation notice sent by the Election Commission not later than thirty days after the notice was sent.

The Indiana Election Commission is updating a file of active voters. However, final numbers for all counties were not yet available at the time preparation of the fiscal note. Therefore, for purposes of this note,

registered voter (active and inactive voters) data was utilized.

Currently, there are 5530 precincts in Indiana. If precincts' active voter size increased to 2000 voters, there could be a reduction in the number of precincts by approximately 2200. The statewide average precinct size among registered voters as of the 2000 general election was 723. Only Dekalb County had over 1,200 registered voters for the 2000 general election. Several other counties had over 1,000 but less than 1,200 registered voters. Given the number of active voters, it is probable that every precinct in the state is below 1,200 active voters as of the 2000 general election. However, based on U.S. Census estimates, population growth in the several counties including several of the "doughnut" counties surrounding Marion County (Boone, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, Madison, Morgan, and Shelby) has increased at a faster rate than many other counties in the state. The following table shows these counties' population growth ranked by population percent change over 1990-1999.

<u>County</u>	<u>7/1/99 Estimate</u>	<u>4/1/90 Population Estimates Base</u>	<u>Numeric Population Change 1990-99</u>	<u>Percent Population Change 1990-99</u>	<u>Annualized Percent Change 1990-1999</u>
Hamilton	172,094	108,936	63,158	58	5.2%
Hendricks	98,826	75,717	23,109	30.5	3.0%
Johnson	112,724	88,109	24,615	27.9	2.8%
Dearborn	48,011	38,835	9,176	23.6	2.4%
Hancock	55,617	45,527	10,090	22.2	2.2%
Morgan	67,003	55,920	11,083	19.8	2.0%
Owen	20,619	17,281	3,338	19.3	2.0%
Washington	28,233	23,717	4,516	19	2.0%
Jennings	28,106	23,661	4,445	18.8	1.9%
Jasper	29,462	24,823	4,639	18.7	1.9%
Harrison	35,376	29,890	5,486	18.4	1.9%
Boone	44,835	38,147	6,688	17.5	1.8%

With fewer precincts, counties would reduce the number of precinct election boards. Currently, precinct election officers are appointed by the County Election Board, except in Lake County where the officers are appointed by a combination of an Election Board and Registration Board. A precinct has the following officers:

Type of Officer	Number
Inspector	1
Judge	2
Poll Clerk	2
Sheriff	2
Asst. Poll Clerk	2 (Optional)

The County Executive is allowed by State statute to fix a per diem and a meal allowance for work performed on election day by the above listed officers. For municipal elections, a town fiscal body fixes compensation. In addition, an inspector can receive additional compensation for the duties of acquisition and return of

election supplies to the Circuit Court Clerk's Office.

In future elections, as counties potentially update their voting systems, savings could be experienced if fewer voting machines were required, especially if more precincts were able to be located in a single polling place. Additionally, the proposal may prevent the division of some large residential units, such as apartment/condo complexes or dormitories, into separate precincts.

Explanation of Local Revenues:

State Agencies Affected: Indiana Election Commission.

Local Agencies Affected: Counties.

Information Sources: Indiana Election Commission; U.S. Bureau of Census.